

30 November 2016

**Statement for the Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations**  
**Committee on Armed Services**  
**United States House of Representatives**

I am honored to have been invited to appear before the Subcommittee as the Members address the matter of force management policies, commonly referred to as “troop caps.”

I would like to make three points as a matter of record:

1. The source of Force Management Policies. Force Management Policies should be the result of a civil-military dialogue which clarifies the strategic aims of the force being used and the size and type of military force necessary to achieve those aims. When Force Management Policies are determined in this way, they can be very useful. When the policies become a substitute for such a dialogue, however, and used as directives derived from artificial reasons independent of the strategic aim being sought, they have negative effects that, in turn, have second and third order negative consequences.
2. The purpose of Force Management Policies. Force Management Policies are not ends-in-themselves. Rather, they are—or should be—means to increase the probability of properly aligning strategic aims being sought in a particular situation with the means allocated. If Force Management Policies become ends-in-themselves, they obstruct this purpose and set the conditions for prolonging the use of force unnecessarily and for long-term erosive effects of military forces.
3. The effects of Force Management Policies.
  - a. The quality of a military force is a dynamic and iterative characteristic. Force Management Policy decisions and actions over time can continually increase the quality of a force. Similarly, decisions and actions over time can have the opposite effect: continually eroding the quality of a force. Readiness, cohesion, leader development, and morale are such iterative characteristics that are affected by policy decisions.
  - b. Military forces are organic wholes. Some parts of the whole can be detached and used separately, at least for a time. Force Management Policy decisions that detach parts of a force, especially over many rotations, affects the whole, and those effects should be part of the civil-military dialogue from which the Force Management Policy decisions are made. Effects of partial unit deployments are not felt by the Combatant Commanders. They are felt by the Service Chiefs, which demonstrates

the necessary inclusion of both Combatant Commanders and Service Chiefs in the Force Management Policy dialogue.

- c. Military forces are an official arm of the government. Contractors often fill the gap in those cases where the actual force-level requirement is greater than what is allowed by Force Management Policy decisions. When the gap is small, contractors may make sense, especially in cases where the host government may be sensitive to the number of in-country U.S. military personnel. When the gap is large, however, using contractors may take on the hue of “outsourcing” foreign policy or military operations or of “masking” the actual requirements not only for a specific mission but also for the overall size of U.S. Armed Forces . Additionally, contractors, which may seem the cheaper alternative in the short-term, are not actually cheaper in the long-term since the government is already paying for the military capability that contractors provide.

I look forward to discussing this important matter with the Members on Thursday, December 1, 2016.

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